

WHISTLEBLOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

05 April 2020 – Special Edition No 2

EDITORIAL

Week 2 of the Lock Down nearly complete. Hopefully, senses of humour are intact and no one has gone stir crazy. No doubt many of you are finally getting down to those tasks that were put to one side for some time ago Unfortunately, there is no longer a good excuse to keep avoiding them, be they in the house, the garden or, more appropriately, on your layout. Just remember, this is a long haul so don't have all the fun too early, you do need to stretch the tasks out. With this in mind, David Harrington has forwarded a link to a jigsaw site with railway subjects and Mike Le Marie has assembled a quiz to exercise the grey matter.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

So, we are now onto the second special edition of Whistleblower. How long this state of play is going to last is anybody's guess. I trust that none of you have contracted the virus. Sad to say, both Bron and I have got it, albeit only a mild form but that is bad enough. We are now into our third week and it looks as if we could be past the peak.

The camaraderie of the Club is holding up well and the "group.io" is another way for us all to keep in touch. I commend it to you all.

Thank you Jon for your efforts and I hope you all enjoy this edition.

Stay safe and keep smiling.

Richard

CLUB EMAIL GROUP: Farnhamrc@groups.io – Noel Leaver

You should all have had an email offering you the chance to join a Club email group, if not please email me at: n.leaver@btoopenworld.com

The purpose is to allow members to discuss projects, ask for help, and chat generally about railway modelling. You can post by sending an email or post online using the "groups.io" web site. Email can include photographs or have photos attached. Photos and files can be uploaded to the group web site as well.

You have several options about how you to receive messages.

You can get every message sent as an email when it is posted, this is the best option if you want to be active on the group. If there is a subject you are not interested in you can click the 'mute topic' link to so as not to get any more replies on that subject.

Or you can get a summary email once a day (or every 12 messages if more than 12 in a day), this is good if you want to read what is going on but will normally not be posting and replying. You can get either a list of message headers and a link to read them online, or the text of all the emails.

Or you can choose not to get any emails, but to just read the messages using the groups.io web site when you feel like it.

A side benefit is there is a list of members available, so you can contact members directly by email on private matters. You can also reply privately to any email rather than via the group by using a different link.

It helps if you send a separate email for each topic: if you have two things to talk about post 2 emails. And if a topic branches off on another subject it is best to change the subject line or start a new topic.

So please use the group to ask any modelling questions and to tell us what modelling you are doing while self-isolating.

(BTW, the software is free and completely free of advertising. There is a storage limit for a free group but it will not be a problem for a group our size.)

SOME 009 WAGONS FOR SELBORNE – Julian Evison

'Selborne' is my contribution to the club's 009 group modular layout. The Tisted, Selborne and Liss Light Railway joined the named metropolises with a 2'3" gauge railway and was generally known as the Selborne Light railway (SL for short). All good model railways have too much stock and I am working to make this happen for 'Selborne', so the last couple of weeks have given good opportunity to finish off quite a few half-built items.

Let's start with two short rakes of ballast wagons. Most of them are in the Engineers livery of olive green with N (for Engineering) numbers. To quote the old joke: "Yesterday, I couldn't spell "Ngeenier" - now I are one." (I think I can get away with this as a (retired) engineer). The reality was that my transfer sheet had lots of little 'N's and no 'E's.

All the wagons are Colin Ashby kits made up as intended. Irrationally, I don't like spending money on couplings, so only the outer wagons have standard hook and loops, the inner ones being semi-permanently coupled, which also shortens the rakes a bit.



Photo 1 – rake of three green wagons



Photo 2 – rake of two green and one red

Next, we have a couple of bulk creosote tankers from the East Hampshire Creosote Co's works at Snailing Lane. Actually, they are a pair of Triang TT fuel tankers, slightly reworked and put on Peco N scale chassis. This is one of the easiest conversions you can do and I am grateful to the second hand stall at our show for the basic materials. Again, they are semi-permanently coupled.



Photo 3 – two tankers



Photo 4 – two bolster wagons with pipe load.

Now we have a pair of 009 Society bolster wagons with a pipe load. This is a really neat little kit which takes only a few minutes to build in to a characterful model

Here are my final two offerings, both cattle wagons built from 009 Society kits. These are based on those built around 1900 for the Tralee and Dingle. By this time open cattle trucks were very much frowned upon, but they add a bit of variety to a train.



Photo 5 – two cattle trucks

I think I have now come to the end of building new goods stock, bogie open wagons will probably be recycled from my old layout 'Khan' (though Imperial German postbags will take some explaining, as well as the lack of tarpaulins.....)

TIME ON YOUR HANDS? – Mike Le Marie

No model railway club, no church bell ringing, no orienteering, no Guildford shop, no going for long walks, no volunteering at the Old Kiln Light Railway etc. Suddenly I find myself with lots of time on my hands. There is a limit to the amount of gardening I can face each day although I admit the recent weather has dried the garden out and the soil is workable. I guess I am going to have to tackle all those jobs I have put off for months if not years. I am probably luckier than many in that I have a purpose built, insulated and heated model railway shed with enough room to have both my N gauge layout Kinlochlaggen and my 009 modules out at the same time.



There are various club projects to try and keep alive eg the charity layout and the N gauge groups proposed Tamar Bridge and Saltash layout. I acquired some Metcalfe kits for the charity layout and managed to pass them on to other club members to have a go at, some building one for the first time. I have no excuse now not to finish off my grandson's layout so that they can enjoy it whilst they are off school. My 009 modules need scenery and more details added. So far, I have added working lights to the station and the engine shed.

So, what projects could I undertake?

The above is all very well but what can I do when those tasks are completed. I decided the answer was to try and learn new skills so I am going to have a go at making buildings and structures using a variety of methods and materials including downloaded card kits and also using thin ply, card, plastic sheet and modelling clays. I am sure there will be some disasters along the way but that is how you learn. I may also try and teach myself weathering techniques and making loads for some of my freight wagons. If all else fails I will start designing and building my next N gauge layout which will be based on coal exchange sidings somewhere up north. I need an excuse to run my soon to be acquired N Gauge Society NCB Hunslet diesel shunter in realistic surrounds.

So why not have a go yourself at something new, or something unusual. What could you produce using card and all those acquired wooden tea stirrers we pick up in handfuls at every opportunity? Most retailers are maintaining their mail order service. The latest information I have from Kernow is that Bachmann and Hornby are still supplying their retailers but that PECO and Dapol have shut down until further notice meaning that there will be no stock replenishment as items become sold out. All being well we will hold the annual model making competition in September. You now have no excuse for not producing an entry. I am sure, if necessary, that the committee would agree to some new categories to include first time entries. I will be entering again but I know my wife will be glad not to have a club trophy (2 at the moment) on the mantelpiece yet again. Go on, make her day!!

Do keep in touch both with the club as a whole and members of your gauge group. Write something for Whistleblower or the newly set up Google Group and tell us all what you have or indeed have not achieved or learnt.

Club Magazines

I continue to receive magazines on behalf of the club. At the time of writing I have the most recent editions of Railway Modeller, British Railway Modelling and Model Railway Journal. If there is any member who would like one of these magazines please contact me on 01252 449265 and I will post them to you. We can sort out postage costs at a later date.

WEST COAST MAIN LINE JOURNEYS – Ian George

Last summer I took a trip along the WCML from London Euston to Manchester with a return journey from Preston to Euston. Back home again I thought it would be interesting to compare the journeys with equivalent journeys taken from my BR Passenger Service Timetable for summer 1960 ie the tail end of the era of steam-hauled expresses on BR.

Straight-away my search for comparable expresses on the WCML in the 1960's hit a snag due to the London Midland's complicated system of timing its expresses compared with other regions.

On the Western region life was simple. Apart from a select few limited load prestige trains such as "The Bristolian", all the Western region expresses on a particular route were timed to run at the same speed. So, for example, between Paddington and Exeter the total journey time for expresses would vary depending on the number of station stops on-route but the actual running time would be standard. The load varied but the running time didn't vary according to the class of engine provided; a "King" would be expected to take say 15 coaches, a "Castle" 13 coaches and a "Hall" 10 coaches. If the load exceeded the maximum allowed for the engine available, they would find a bigger engine or provide a pilot engine; in all cases the scheduled running time stayed the same.

On the Eastern region life was even simpler. Like the Western, apart from the select few prestige trains all expresses on a particular route were scheduled at the same running speed. The Eastern didn't even have to worry about matching engine loads to number of coaches, or providing pilot engines, thanks to its fleet of over 200 Pacifics that could deal with any length of train required.

Over on the London Midland region life was much more complicated. Despite being the largest region with the most and the heaviest expresses they possessed only 51 Class 8 Pacifics, which was nowhere near enough to power every express at the desired speeds. To deal with this problem they devised a matrix system based on 5 different running times for their expresses taking into account the 5 classes of engine to be allocated (8P Pacifics, 7P Scots/Brits, 5XP Jubilees, 5MT black 5's or 4P Compounds) and the number of coaches to be pulled.

When each new season's timetable was prepared expresses were designated into each of the 5 timing bands. For the expresses allocated the fastest of the 5 running times, an 8P pacific was allowed to take up to 15 coaches. Having quickly run out of 8P engines, trains were then allocated to 7P engines but they were only allowed to take 12 coaches at the fastest set of times. Any 7P allocated express over 12 coaches, and there were many, had to be relegated to a slower time band. Once all the 7P engines had been used up any remaining expresses would be allocated to class 5XP Jubilees. They were allowed to take only 11 coaches at the fastest running time, so trains over that limit had to drop down probably several timing categories. And so on.

The differences between the various running times could be significant, for example between Euston and Crewe the difference between the fastest and the slowest of the 5 running times was over 30minutes. This created a number of problems for the operating staff, the most obvious of which was that footplate crews, signalmen etc needed to keep referring to the working timetable to be sure at what time each train was due to be where. The bigger problem came in the "flighting" of expresses. On any railway the most efficient way of running expresses along the same set of lines shared with slower passenger trains and goods trains is to clear the slower traffic out of the way for a period and use that time to run "flights" of

expresses through in quick succession while the lines are clear. This works fine when all the expresses are travelling at the same speed; more stressful for the operating staff when each of the expresses in the flight could be scheduled to run at any of 5 different running speeds. Much admiration for the operators who without modern technology kept everything moving. For my journey from Euston to Manchester the nearest 1960's equivalent would have been the 09.45 departure, known as "The Comet", a named train dating back to early railway years. It was allocated a Class 7 engine (in practice a Longsight shedded "Britannia") and at 12 coaches was just light enough to be allowed the fastest running speed. This train also illustrates the extent the railways went to generate custom from as wide an area as possible, being scheduled to leave the WCML at Colwich Junction (just south of Stafford) to run along the former North Staffordshire Railway route via Stoke and Macclesfield rather than via Crewe. It also included a pair of through carriages to be detached at Stockport and then conveyed onwards via various towns in east Lancashire before terminating at Colne in west Yorkshire. The train's 12 coaches included a 3-coach catering set: a full kitchen coach flanked by an open first and a dining open second, giving seating for 90 diners. For 7 shillings (£0.35p), I could have enjoyed a leisurely silver-service "full English" breakfast and I would have needed such sustenance because arrival in Manchester was not until 13.20, a journey time of 3 hours 35 minutes for the 161 miles.

My 2019 equivalent was the 09.20 Virgin Trains 11 coach Class 390 "Pendolino", one of three such trains departing for Manchester within 45 minutes; (Euston was running at full capacity). This train followed the same route as "The Comet", with the same stops at Stoke, Macclesfield and Stockport (no through coaches to drop off this time). It also made an additional stop at Milton Keynes, a town which wasn't built in "Comet" days. Complimentary "breakfast" was a let-down consisting of a cheese sandwich and a pot of yoghurt; however, the speed throughout the journey was impressive.

The Class 390s entered service on the Euston to Manchester route in 2003 and had been designed to operate on a newly upgraded WCML at up to 140mph however the physical upgrade of the line proved to be problematical for Railtrack, and after running several years late and 4 times over budget the upgrade was curtailed to deliver a line speed of 125 mph. Painful memories of this attempted upgrade explains why none of the parties involved believe an attempt at a further upgrade of the WCML could ever be a viable alternative to HS2. Despite this ongoing speed restriction, the Class 390s have proved very successful, the original 8 coach trains being lengthened to 9 coaches, some of which have been further lengthened to 11 coaches along with additional new 11 coach sets to form sub class 390/1. Arrival at Manchester was at 11.27, a journey time of 2hours 7mins. Whereas the coach set for "The Comet" would have been taken into the carriage depot at Longsight to be serviced ready for re-use on that evening's "up Comet" that departed at 17.45, the Pendolino set would be serviced in the platform and be heading south again within the hour. Incidentally, the new fleet of class 390's are all maintained at that same Longsight carriage depot.

Turning now to my return journey from Preston to Euston, my equivalent 1960's steam express would have been the 09.00 Perth – Euston which departed Preston at 15.02. This was a good example of the multi portioned trains of that era, the 11 coaches arriving at Preston (3 ex Inverness/ 8 ex Perth) being added to by 4 coaches from Workington and 1 from Barrow making a 16 coach load for the Camden shedded 8P Pacific that had taken over at Carlisle and would work through to Euston. Modellers note that because of its multi-portion origins the 16 coaches included 5 corridor brake coaches. This was not considered one of the prestige expresses as is indicated by the catering provision, a single "restaurant composite" seating only 30 diners. "Table d'hote dinner" would be served for 10 shillings (£0.50p). At 16 coaches the load was 1 coach over the limit for a class 8 engine to be allocated the fastest timing band and with stops at Crewe and Rugby the train would have

not have reached Euston until 19.23, ie 4 hours 21 minutes for the 188 miles from Preston.



My Class 390, a 9 coach set this time, had originated in Glasgow, and like most Virgin WCML services stopped at Preston for its crew change, which in steam days would have usually taken place at Crewe, presumably due to Preston being almost halfway between Glasgow and Euston. Departing at 14.59 and having stopped at Wigan and Warrington the train ran non-stop to Euston arriving 17.10, ie 2 hours 11 minutes. The 390 would be serviced in the platform and headed north again within the hour. This high utilisation compares

with the carriages from the steam era train which would have been taken to Willesden carriage sidings where overnight it would have been serviced then split, its coaches joining 3 different departures the following morning, the first of which being its restaurant car joining the 10.00 Glasgow departure, the "Royal Scot".

In conclusion the Class 390s are comfortable, and passengers certainly get the sensation of travelling at speed. My one criticism would be the common modern coach fault of the seats not always lining up with the windows. Overall an enjoyable trip and an interesting comparison with a time when the pace of life was much slower but perhaps more civilised, but I did miss the "full English".

MEMORIES OF AN OLD MAN – Ron Burnham

At fifteen and about to leave school, I was now to find a job, which was, I hoped, with British Railways who had a large marshalling yard and locomotive Depot at Feltham. It was something I wanted to do from early days as living in the area I had seen the steam trains coming and going and knew that was the job I would like to do.

Now of age I applied to join the railway. I was accepted and had to go for an interview at the loco sheds and report to a Mr Balcomb him being the deputy Loco Manager. After he told me what the job entailed, he introduced me to a Mr Arthur Lobb who was the cleaners' foreman and he also issued uniforms. They were held in an old railway coach with blacked out windows. The uniform consisted of two denim bib and brace trousers, two denim jackets, a surge reefer jacket and a hat. I was then sent home to report for duty 08.00 the next day.

Having arrived on duty, I was met by Mr Lobb who introduced me to my fellow cleaners and then went on to explain my duties which were pretty straight forward. You were to grab a handful of waste cloth, then place it into a bucket of mixed oil and paraffin, wipe it on the boiler and tender and all running motion, then, with dry clean waste, wipe it all off!

During my time as a cleaner, Mr Lobb would on occasion allow us to become third man on the yard Shunter; their function was to make up trains for different destinations. There was also the hump Shunter and he would be doing the same thing. Working alongside him the firemen allowed us to experience his duties. He would also allow us for short periods to take over under his supervision.

There were also other places we were allowed, those being Willesden, Neasden and Brent.

Here again he would explain the functions of his job, again allowing us to have a go. Now with some eight or nine months passed and having made a number of local friends who also work for BR, some live on a local estate which is owned by the company there are two roads aptly named Southern Ave and Waterloo Crescent. Those living there would be drivers, firemen, signalmen, shunters, and others.

It was now time to move on as a cleaner, having passed the practical test, and was classed Past Cleaner. This would allow me do restricted fireman duties those being yard shunting, preparing and disposing of engines. Preparing was to get the engine ready for a senior fireman to take out and disposing would be to relieve him on completing his duty.

More to follow

CALLING FOR ADVICE AND TO RELIEVE THE BOREDOM – Ian Welch

My challenge relates to OO9, but I am hoping that this might appeal to all of you whatever the scale.

Getting the scale right.

On my OO9 layout (which I acquired rather than started from scratch :-{) I have a blank canvas in the middle as shown on this photo with the grey ply section. My first idea was to build a Goods Shed (eg Wills Craftsman kit) which being OO scale I thought would be ideal.

As you can see the Goods Shed is hideously large especially when measured against the cottage or the wood store. Julian gave me some helpful tips on Narrow Gauge Scale and so for my second attempt I bashed together a much smaller barn and a forge (also OO scale Wills kits) – see my second picture below. Comparing this with the Goods shed I am happy that I've got closer to the right appearance. But I'm still puzzling over what is going on and is it all a trick of the eye? If I want to insert people or a telephone box I presume I need OO/4mm scale. Conversely N scale buildings and people are too small I think. What is going on?



Ideas for animation.

So, the second part of my challenge is how to make the forge and its forecourt more interesting. I'd love to create perhaps a feature of interest – maybe a moving sawmill or hammer or similar rather than a static display of sheds. Does anyone have any suggestions on how to do this? And what basic materials I could start with? I think I've got a couple of servos somewhere.

Thanks in anticipation.

NAMED TRAINS QUIZ – Mike Le Marie

Listed below are 20 named British trains which have run at some time between the 1950s and the present day. Name the start and finish station and if London then say which terminus station, however not all these trains started in London.

1. The Caledonian
2. The Heart of Midlothian
3. The North Briton
4. The Welshman
5. The Bon Accord
6. The Broadsman
7. The Cathedrals Express
8. The Golden Hind
9. The Hebridean
10. The Lakes Express
11. The Kentish Belle
12. The Master Cutler
13. The Merchant Venturer
14. The Norseman
15. The Palatine
16. The Red Dragon
17. The William Shakespeare
18. The Ulster Express
19. The Devonian
20. The Cornish Scot

Have fun. Answers next time.

AND FINALLY, DIGITAL JIGSAWS – David Harrington

We've created a number of new digital jigsaws - which may be just the thing for the current circumstances! [You will find jigsaws of varying difficulty \(Ctrl Click here\)](#). As they are on the public website please do invite your family and friends to indulge too.